SPECIAL FEATURE NO. 3-1267 MARCH 6, 1978
PHILOMENA JUREY/WHITE HOUSE

REPORT ON HANDICAPPED
(INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

///EDITORS NOTE: THIS REPORT IS BASED ON A CEREMONY HELD AT THE WHITE HOUSE MARCH SECOND, BUT IT IS WRITTEN SO IT CAN BE USED ANYTIME///

ANNCR: PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE CONGRESS HAVE RECEIVED A REPORT ON THE PROBLEMS OF HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS AND HOW TO ASSURE THEIR FULLER PARTICIPATION IN AMERICAN LIFE. VOA WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT PHILOMENA JUREY FILED THIS REPORT:

VOICE: WHAT AMOUNTS TO A PROPOSED BILL OF RIGHTS FOR PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY DISABLED AMERICAN CITIZENS IS CONTAINED IN A REPORT PREPARED FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE CONGRESS. IT WAS PUT TOGETHER BY THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS, WHICH WAS AUTHORIZED BY AN ACT OF CONGRESS AND CONVENED ON A NATIONAL LEVEL LAST MAY AFTER A SERIES OF PRELIMINARY SESSIONS IN EACH STATE AND TERRITORY.

THE PURPOSE WAS TO ASSESS -- AND GENERATE AN AWARENESS OF -- THE PROBLEM AND POTENTIALS OF THE HANDICAPPED, AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AIMED AT ENABLING THEM TO LIVE WITH DIGNITY AND TAKE PART IN COMMUNITY LIFE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

THE REPORT WAS PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S WIFE, ROSALYNN, WHO HAS HAD A SPECIAL INTEREST IN THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE, AND TO LEADING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS IN A WHITE HOUSE CEREMONY. AMONG ITS SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS: A NATIONAL INFORMATION-CLEARINGHOUSE SYSTEM TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES GET THE INFORMATION THEY NEED, ENACTMENT

VOICE: (CONT'D) OF A COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM EMBRACING THE NEEDS OF THE DISABLED, AND AMENDMENT OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT TO GIVE THE PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY DISABLED THE SAME PROTECTIONS AS THOSE NOW GIVEN MINORITIES, ELDERLY PEOPLE AND WOMEN.

DURING THE CEREMONY, BOTH HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE SECRETARY JOSEPH CALIFANO AND SPOKESMEN FOR CONGRESS PROMISED THE REPORT WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO GROW DUSTY ON A SHELF. SAID MISTER CALIFANO:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- CALIFANO

"WE BELIEVE IN THE ESSENTIAL GOODNESS AND HUMANITY OF THIS COUNTRY, IN THE POWER OF THIS COUNTRY AND THE POWER OF ITS PEOPLE TO BE GOOD CITIZENS, TO BE GENEROUS CITIZENS, TO BE COMPASSIONATE, TO RECOGNIZE THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL IN THIS COUNTRY HA NOT ONLY A BODY AND A MIND BUT A SOUL."

VOICE: AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE, HENRY VISCARDI, DESCRIBED THE REPORT THIS WAY:

TAPE: CUT TWO -- VISCARDI

"IN PRESENTING THIS REPORT TO MISSUS CARTER ON BEHALF OF MY COLLEAGUES, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT IT IS A DOCUMENT EXPRESSING THE ASPIRATIONS AND HOPES OF MILLIONS OF DISABLED AMERICANS.

AND ON THEIR BEHALF I'M VERY PROUD TO PRESENT THIS REPORT TO YOU AND TO THANK THOSE WHO HELPED TO WRITE IT. AND IN DOING SO, AS I REFLECT ON THEIR DELIBERATIONS, HOW MUCH HOPE THERE IS IN THIS FOR MILLIONS OF DISABLED FELLOW AMERICANS. I WOULD TAKE THE LIBERTY OF TELLING YOU WHAT THEY HAVE REMINDED ME.

TO HOPE IS A DUTY, NOT A LUXURY, TO HOPE IS NOT TO DREAM, BUT TO TURN DREAMS INTO REALITY. AND BLESSED INDEED ARE THOSE WHO DREAM DREAMS, AND ARE READY TO PAY THE PRICE TO MAKE THEM COME TRUE."

VOICE: IN ACCEPTING THE REPORT ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT, MISSUS CARTER SAID:

TAPE: CUT THREE -- CARTER

"I THINK THIS IS AN HISTORIC OCCASION AND I THINK THIS REPORT REPRESENTS A UNIQUE MOMENT IN THE STRUGGLE OF HANDICAPPED PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE AS FIRST-CLASS CITIZENS IN OUR COUNTRY.

FOR FAR TOO LONG, HANDICAPPED PEOPLE HAVE SUFFERED FROM ARTIFICIAL AND UNNECESSARY BARRIERS, WHICH HAVE DEPRIVED THEM OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE A PUBLIC EDUCATION, TO LIVE AND WORK AS THEY CHOOSE, AND TO ENJOY THOSE RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES WHICH MOST OF US JUST TAKE FOR GRANTED.

I'M GLAD THAT WE'VE REALIZED THAT WE CAN NO LONGER ALLOW SIMPLE THINGS SUCH AS THE WIDTH OF A DOOR, OR THE LACK OF A RAMP, OR THE ABSENCE OF ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION -- TO NAME A FEW THINGS -- TO KEEP OUR HANDICAPPED CITIZENS OUT OF SCHOOLS, STORES, BUSINESSES OR OTHER PUBLIC PLACES. AND WE CAN NO LONGER TOLERATE THOSE MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, WHICH HAVE SO OFTEN REMOVED THEM FROM THE MAINSTREAM OF SOCIETY."

VOICE: THAT WAS MISSUS ROSALYNN CARTER, RECEIVING THE FINAL REPORT OF THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS.

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